

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ANDREY KELIN,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,  
AT THE 968th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

24 October 2013

**In response to the address by Mr. Thorbjørn Jagland,  
Secretary General of the Council of Europe**

Mr. Chairperson,  
Mr. Secretary General,

We welcome you to the Permanent Council meeting and thank you for your clear and pragmatic remarks regarding co-operation between the Council of Europe and the OSCE. Generally speaking, we support your approach to the rational use of resources and avoiding duplication in the work of the two organizations.

The Russian leadership attaches great importance to our country's participation in the work of the Council of Europe. I am certain that you were able to see this for yourself during your visit to the Russian Federation in May of this year as well as during the meeting with the Chairman of the State Duma, Sergey Naryshkin, in October.

The many conventions drawn up within the Council of Europe cover various areas, thus ensuring the unity of the legal and humanitarian space within the European continent. Your organization is called upon to provide a reliable humanitarian basis for equal and indivisible security in its area of responsibility.

We believe that the Council of Europe should also continue to play an important role in solving problems concerned with its traditional field of responsibility, first and foremost in such areas as promoting the rule of law, strengthening democracy and protecting human rights. These activities should be developed alongside greater co-operation in social, cultural, educational, sporting and other areas.

We support the efforts aimed at strengthening the Council of Europe's effectiveness as the leading pan-European format of co-operation. We commend your personal contribution to the reform of the Council of Europe with a view to strengthening the role and authority of the Strasbourg-based organization.

The OSCE and the Council of Europe have much in common here. The OSCE, like the Council of Europe, also requires reform and needs to be adapted to the tasks and

instruments of today and tomorrow. In your address you called attention to the need for co-operation and assistance to States on the basis of principles such as an equal and non-discriminatory approach to all countries, impartiality and reliability of sources of information, dialogue and confidence. The same is true for the OSCE.

Mr. Secretary General,

The countries making up both organizations are facing any number of common challenges and problems. Social instability, migration problems, extremism, hawkish nationalism and neo-Nazism, intolerance and xenophobia are posing an ever greater threat to contemporary European societies. Other problems include discrimination and division along ethnic, religious, linguistic, cultural or other lines, insufficient protection of children against cruel treatment, sexual exploitation and pornography, restrictions on freedom of movement and freedom of the media, and flagrant violations of privacy. These problems are on the rise as the financial crisis intensifies.

We should like to draw particular attention to the shameful problem for present-day Europe of mass statelessness in Latvia and Estonia. Hundreds of thousands of “non-citizens” are deprived of basic political and socio-economic rights, including the possibility of making full use of their mother tongue in these countries. We believe that the OSCE and the Council of Europe should pool their efforts to rectify this unacceptable situation.

We cannot allow the young generation of Europeans to lose their direction. Attempts at revising the history of the Second World War, reviving Nazi and fascist ideologies and rehabilitating the Nazis and their accomplices are aimed at just this. Their actions, as you know, were deemed criminal by the Nuremberg Tribunal. The gathering and marches of Waffen SS legionnaires, neo-Nazis and other radical right-wing associations in various countries require a tough response. We commend your personal attention to and support for the activities of leading anti-fascist non-governmental organizations, in particular the international human rights movement World Without Nazism.

Efforts to eliminate visa barriers in Europe, which hinder humanitarian contacts and generally complicate the movement towards a common pan-European space, are a matter of priority. We trust, Mr. Secretary General, that these tasks will remain at the focus of your attention.

Mr. Secretary General,

In 2005 the OSCE and the Council of Europe worked together to identify four priority areas of co-operation. These are combating terrorism and trafficking in human beings, the rights of national minorities, and tolerance and non-discrimination. Time has shown that despite some achievements there is still much room for improvement here. In that connection, we believe it important to continue to focus on these aspects, instead of racing ahead in search of new topics and areas.

As you know, active discussion is currently under way within the OSCE as part of the Helsinki+40 process. Its main task is to identify specific ways of achieving the strategic goal set at the OSCE Summit in Astana of creating a common and indivisible security community. It is perfectly clear that all of the main players should participate in this process and by virtue of their mandates work to consolidate the security space. In that connection, we urge the

Council of Europe to play a more active part in the Helsinki+40 discussions and to share its experience and expertise.

In conclusion, current threats and challenges have reached such a scale that wasting energy on secondary and, at times, artificially contrived problems is a luxury we can ill afford. The time for edification and “mentoring” is over. We need a common agenda, which would work to consolidate the continent and not divide it according to the principle of “you’re either with us, or against us”. The set of values of the civilized world that have formed over centuries should become the foundations upon which our security community will be built. There will be work here for both the OSCE and the Council of Europe.

Thank you for your attention.